

## Transition from high school to work

*The transition from high school to work can be difficult. Without prior job experience or specialized training, school leavers may find it difficult to find jobs they are willing to take. The employment rate among school leavers, both those who have not finished high school and those who have finished but have not gone on to college, indicates the difficulty of making this transition.*

- In 1995, 63 percent of recent high school graduates not enrolled in college were employed, compared to 48 percent of recent school dropouts.
- During the period of economic recession between 1989 and 1992, the employment rates in both groups fell about 10 percentage points. However, in 1993, the employment rate for recent school dropouts increased markedly, rising more than 10 percentage points.
- In 1995, white recent high school graduates not enrolled in college were more likely to be employed than their black or Hispanic counterparts.
- Between 1960 and 1995, male recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and recent school dropouts were more likely than their female counterparts to be employed (see supplemental table 29-1).

### Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by race/ethnicity: Selected Octobers 1972-95

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college				Recent school dropouts			
	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic
1972	70.1	73.5	48.3	—	46.8	47.0	42.8	—
1974	69.1	72.9	46.0	—	49.3	53.9	36.2	—
1976	68.8	73.1	38.6	—	44.8	49.6	20.9	—
1978	74.9	79.0	45.8	68.9	51.2	54.2	22.3	—
1980	68.9	74.6	34.7	—	44.6	51.2	20.9	47.8
1982	60.4	68.4	29.3	43.5	38.0	44.6	16.2	—
1984	64.0	70.7	44.8	49.4	44.0	51.4	24.2	35.7
1986	65.2	71.5	41.1	64.6	48.0	50.4	31.5	46.5
1988	71.9	78.2	55.8	57.3	43.6	47.6	17.6	56.1
1989	71.7	77.6	53.7	49.4	46.7	57.6	26.4	—
1990	67.8	75.0	45.2	—	46.3	56.3	30.9	—
1991	59.6	67.0	32.3	—	36.8	38.6	24.7	—
1992	62.7	71.9	37.0	54.2	36.2	43.1	—	28.3
1993	64.2	71.8	42.3	42.9	46.9	52.6	27.1	—
1994	64.2	73.1	38.0	46.0	42.9	51.7	34.1	28.6
1995	63.1	71.4	51.5	42.1	47.7	51.6	33.5	48.5

— Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

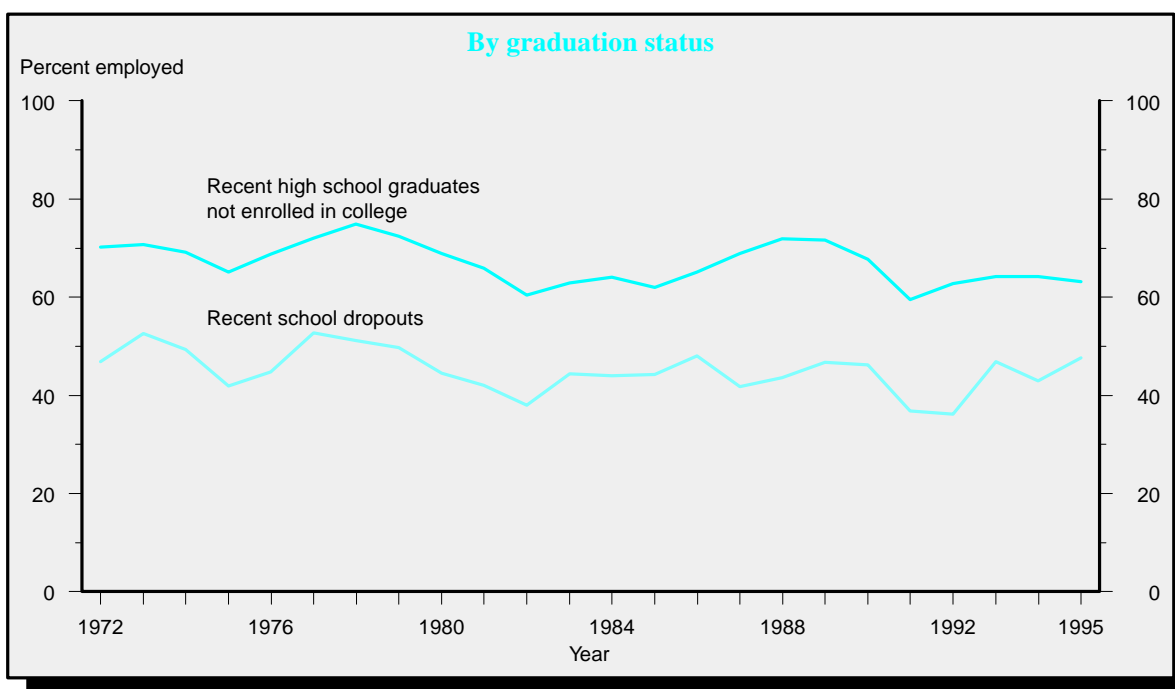
\* Included in the total but not shown separately are high school graduates from other racial/ethnic groups.

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16-24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are

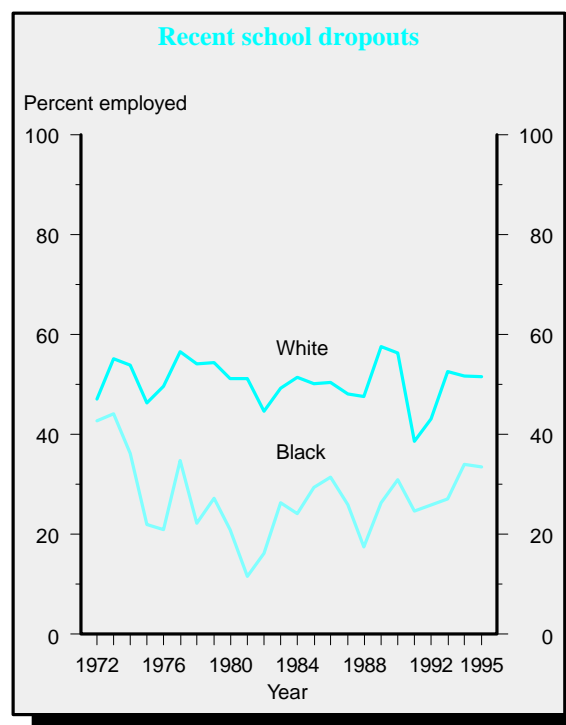
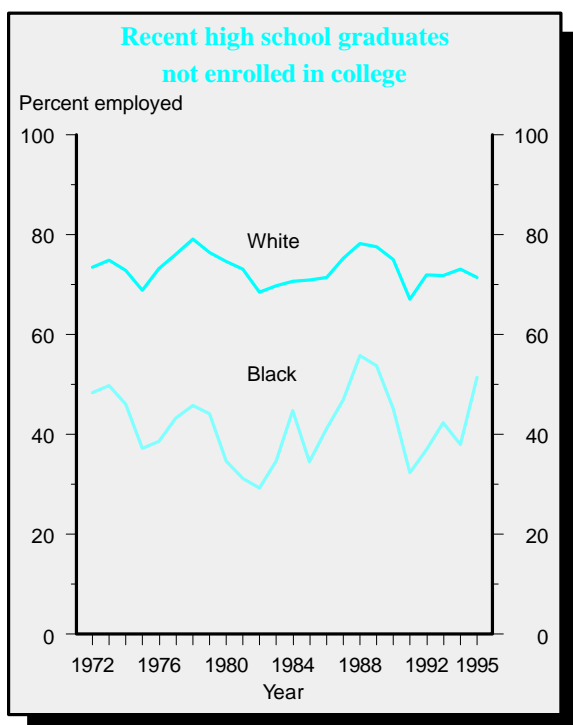
individuals aged 16-24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

## Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts: October 1972–95



### By race/ethnicity



NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16–24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16–24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier, but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

There were too few sample observations for a reliable estimate of black recent school dropouts in 1992.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by race/ethnicity: Selected Octobers 1972--95**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college				Recent school dropouts			
	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic
1972	70.1	73.5	48.3	—	46.8	47.0	42.8	—
1974	69.1	72.9	46.0	—	49.3	53.9	36.2	—
1976	68.8	73.1	38.6	—	44.8	49.6	20.9	—
1978	74.9	79.0	45.8	68.9	51.2	54.2	22.3	—
1980	68.9	74.6	34.7	—	44.6	51.2	20.9	47.8
1982	60.4	68.4	29.3	43.5	38.0	44.6	16.2	—
1984	64.0	70.7	44.8	49.4	44.0	51.4	24.2	35.7
1986	65.2	71.5	41.1	64.6	48.0	50.4	31.5	46.5
1988	71.9	78.2	55.8	57.3	43.6	47.6	17.6	56.1
1989	71.7	77.6	53.7	49.4	46.7	57.6	26.4	—
1990	67.8	75.0	45.2	—	46.3	56.3	30.9	—
1991	59.6	67.0	32.3	—	36.8	38.6	24.7	—
1992	62.7	71.9	37.0	54.2	36.2	43.1	—	28.3
1993	64.2	71.8	42.3	42.9	46.9	52.6	27.1	—
1994	64.2	73.1	38.0	46.0	42.9	51.7	34.1	28.6
1995	63.1	71.4	51.5	42.1	47.7	51.6	33.5	48.5

— Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

\* Included in the total but not shown separately are high school graduates from other racial/ethnic groups.

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16–24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16–24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table 29-1 Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by sex: October 1960–95**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college			Recent school dropouts		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1960	65.0	75.3	58.8	50.9	61.8	40.8
1961	65.4	70.1	62.5	49.4	60.3	38.3
1962	68.3	77.8	61.5	40.4	61.9	23.3
1963	64.7	72.6	59.5	45.1	64.4	27.0
1964	63.4	79.2	53.5	41.6	63.0	24.0
1965	71.9	84.3	63.2	47.9	66.8	26.8
1966	64.9	79.7	55.8	51.4	69.4	33.6
1967	65.9	78.3	57.7	50.3	65.0	34.4
1968	67.3	79.1	60.2	50.0	65.5	34.0
1969	70.1	83.1	61.1	51.0	69.8	30.9
1970	63.2	76.1	52.6	44.7	56.5	31.9
1971	65.1	77.5	55.6	46.8	59.3	31.7
1972	70.1	79.9	62.2	46.8	64.7	28.3
1973	70.7	81.7	61.9	52.7	62.5	40.0
1974	69.1	76.0	63.2	49.3	63.8	32.2
1975	65.1	74.1	57.5	41.9	54.8	29.5
1976	68.8	75.9	61.7	44.8	58.0	28.2
1977	72.0	77.7	67.2	52.7	64.0	39.3
1978	74.9	81.6	67.5	51.2	63.7	34.8
1979	72.4	79.2	66.7	49.7	65.3	34.3
1980	68.9	72.6	65.0	44.6	51.9	34.8
1981	65.9	70.0	62.1	42.1	54.1	29.3
1982	60.4	64.9	56.0	38.0	44.4	30.5
1983	63.0	66.1	60.1	44.4	51.6	35.8
1984	64.0	69.1	59.7	44.0	53.1	33.7
1985	62.0	65.0	59.3	44.2	51.9	35.8
1986	65.2	69.4	61.6	48.0	57.9	36.8
1987	68.9	76.9	61.9	41.8	46.0	36.6
1988	71.9	74.2	69.5	43.6	53.7	30.6
1989	71.7	77.4	65.6	46.7	52.2	40.1
1990	67.8	73.1	61.9	46.3	51.3	40.6
1991	59.6	62.2	56.1	36.8	48.8	25.0
1992	62.7	68.8	55.8	36.2	44.8	28.7
1993	64.2	67.6	60.6	46.9	61.6	30.1
1994	64.2	70.4	57.7	42.9	58.2	27.1
1995	63.1	64.1	62.3	47.7	52.8	41.1

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16–24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16–24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Force Statistics Derived from the Current*

*Population Survey: 1940–87*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table 29-2 Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by family income: October 1972-95**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college			Recent school dropouts		
	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
1972	67.0	68.1	77.5	34.5	49.0	( <sup>1</sup> )
1973	54.2	72.5	77.6	47.0	53.5	( <sup>1</sup> )
1974	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )	( <sup>2</sup> )
1975	52.0	65.6	71.9	33.2	45.3	45.6
1976	50.2	69.7	74.5	33.5	47.7	56.1
1977	56.2	72.1	81.5	44.5	53.4	68.0
1978	59.6	74.3	80.9	42.9	52.8	59.1
1979	67.8	69.9	80.4	26.4	54.4	70.8
1980	56.6	70.1	74.1	30.0	47.9	64.8
1981	53.5	64.4	77.1	27.3	43.9	63.9
1982	44.3	61.3	70.1	27.8	40.8	( <sup>1</sup> )
1983	48.8	65.6	65.2	28.1	46.1	( <sup>1</sup> )
1984	51.7	65.4	71.9	29.3	48.0	( <sup>1</sup> )
1985	47.4	61.7	74.3	29.1	51.0	( <sup>1</sup> )
1986	57.1	63.9	77.2	39.8	50.6	( <sup>1</sup> )
1987	56.6	67.5	83.6	24.7	48.7	( <sup>1</sup> )
1988	55.8	73.2	82.2	36.5	45.6	( <sup>1</sup> )
1989	60.1	72.3	78.4	36.1	51.8	( <sup>1</sup> )
1990	49.0	71.2	71.7	30.9	53.3	( <sup>1</sup> )
1991	48.5	59.0	73.4	26.8	42.1	( <sup>1</sup> )
1992	44.0	67.7	67.5	20.2	42.4	( <sup>1</sup> )
1993	60.9	63.8	69.4	37.6	53.2	( <sup>1</sup> )
1994 <sup>3</sup>	53.6	67.0	66.7	28.9	47.9	( <sup>1</sup> )
1995	56.4	65.3	66.4	36.5	53.5	( <sup>1</sup> )

<sup>1</sup> Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

<sup>2</sup> Data regarding family income are not available for 1974.

<sup>3</sup> Revised from previously published figures.

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16-24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16-24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month. Low income is the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes; high income is the top 20 percent of all family incomes; and middle income is the 60 percent in-between.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table 29-3 Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by parents' highest education level<sup>1</sup>: October 1995**

Parents' highest education level	Percentage distribution	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college	Recent school dropouts
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>47.7</b>
Less than high school graduate	19.8	50.1	39.1
High school graduate	33.8	64.6	49.2
Some college and higher	28.8	67.5	44.0
Not available <sup>2</sup>	17.6	64.3	63.3

<sup>1</sup>Parents' highest education level is defined as either 1) the highest educational attainment of the two parents who reside with the student, or if only one parent is in the residence, the highest educational attainment of that parent; or 2) when neither parent resides with the student (7 percent of high school graduates in 1995), the highest educational attainment of the head of the household and his or her spouse.

<sup>2</sup>Parents' highest education level is not available 1) for those who do not live with their parents and who are classified as the head of the household (not including those who live in college dormitories); and 2) for those whose parents' educational attainment was not reported. In 1995, 18 percent of recent high school graduates were in this category.

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16–24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16–24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table 29-4 Employment rates for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college and for recent school dropouts, by race/ethnicity: October 1972-95**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college				Recent school dropouts			
	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic	Total*	White	Black	Hispanic
1972	70.1	73.5	48.3	—	46.8	47.0	42.8	—
1973	70.7	74.9	49.7	—	52.7	55.1	44.1	—
1974	69.1	72.9	46.0	—	49.3	53.9	36.2	—
1975	65.1	68.9	37.2	—	41.9	46.3	21.9	46.0
1976	68.8	73.1	38.6	—	44.8	49.6	20.9	—
1977	72.0	76.0	43.3	65.7	52.7	56.6	34.8	—
1978	74.9	79.0	45.8	68.9	51.2	54.2	22.3	—
1979	72.4	76.5	44.2	68.8	49.7	54.3	27.3	—
1980	68.9	74.6	34.7	—	44.6	51.2	20.9	47.8
1981	65.9	73.0	31.2	—	42.1	51.3	11.7	50.7
1982	60.4	68.4	29.3	43.5	38.0	44.6	16.2	—
1983	63.0	69.7	34.7	—	44.4	49.3	26.3	—
1984	64.0	70.7	44.8	49.4	44.0	51.4	24.2	35.7
1985	62.0	70.9	34.5	—	44.2	50.1	29.4	37.7
1986	65.2	71.5	41.1	64.6	48.0	50.4	31.5	46.5
1987	68.9	75.2	46.9	54.0	41.8	48.1	25.9	—
1988	71.9	78.2	55.8	57.3	43.6	47.6	17.6	56.1
1989	71.7	77.6	53.7	49.4	46.7	57.6	26.4	—
1990	67.8	75.0	45.2	—	46.3	56.3	30.9	—
1991	59.6	67.0	32.3	—	36.8	38.6	24.7	—
1992	62.7	71.9	37.0	54.2	36.2	43.1	—	28.3
1993	64.2	71.8	42.3	42.9	46.9	52.6	27.1	—
1994	64.2	73.1	38.0	46.0	42.9	51.7	34.1	28.6
1995	63.1	71.4	51.5	42.1	47.7	51.6	33.5	48.5

— Too few sample observations for a reliable estimate.

\* Included in the total but not shown separately are high school graduates from other racial/ethnic groups.

NOTE: Recent high school graduates are individuals aged 16–24 who graduated during the survey year. Recent school dropouts are individuals aged 16–24 who did not graduate and who were in school 12 months earlier but who were not enrolled during the survey month.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table S29 Standard errors for the text table in *Indicator 29***

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college				Recent school dropouts			
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Total	White	Black	Hispanic
1972	1.7	1.7	5.4	—	2.7	3.2	6.1	—
1974	1.6	1.7	5.5	—	2.6	3.1	5.4	—
1976	1.7	1.7	5.5	—	2.6	3.1	5.2	—
1978	1.6	1.6	5.3	7.0	2.6	3.1	4.8	—
1980	1.7	1.7	4.9	—	2.7	3.3	5.2	7.2
1982	1.9	2.0	4.5	7.1	2.9	3.7	5.1	—
1984	2.0	2.2	4.7	7.0	3.1	3.9	6.6	7.5
1986	2.0	2.2	4.9	7.7	3.2	4.3	8.1	7.0
1988	2.2	2.4	5.8	10.4	3.5	4.4	6.5	9.2
1989	2.4	2.5	6.8	10.6	3.9	5.1	7.0	—
1990	2.4	2.6	6.0	—	3.9	5.0	8.2	—
1991	2.6	3.0	5.8	—	3.9	5.2	7.2	—
1992	2.5	2.8	5.7	8.6	3.8	5.0	—	8.1
1993	2.5	2.8	6.8	9.2	3.9	5.0	8.1	—
1994	2.4	2.7	6.3	9.0	3.5	4.7	7.7	7.5
1995	2.4	2.8	6.2	7.3	3.2	4.4	7.5	6.5

— Not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.



**Table S29-1 Standard errors for table 29-1**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college			Recent school dropouts		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1960	2.7	4.0	3.6	4.7	6.6	6.4
1961	2.7	4.3	3.5	4.6	6.3	6.4
1962	2.6	3.6	3.6	5.0	7.5	5.8
1963	2.7	4.0	3.5	5.2	7.2	6.5
1964	2.5	3.4	3.3	3.5	5.1	4.1
1965	2.2	2.7	3.0	3.3	4.3	4.3
1966	2.3	3.1	3.0	3.6	4.7	4.8
1967	1.9	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.7	3.9
1968	1.9	2.7	2.5	2.8	3.8	3.8
1969	1.8	2.3	2.4	2.7	3.5	3.6
1970	1.9	2.4	2.6	2.6	3.6	3.5
1971	1.8	2.4	2.5	2.7	3.7	3.7
1972	1.7	2.2	2.4	2.7	3.6	3.4
1973	1.6	2.0	2.3	2.6	3.3	3.8
1974	1.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	3.3	3.5
1975	1.7	2.3	2.4	2.6	3.8	3.4
1976	1.7	2.2	2.5	2.6	3.5	3.5
1977	1.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	3.4	3.7
1978	1.6	2.0	2.3	2.6	3.3	3.7
1979	1.6	2.1	2.3	2.6	3.5	3.5
1980	1.7	2.2	2.4	2.7	3.5	3.9
1981	1.8	2.5	2.5	2.7	3.8	3.6
1982	1.9	2.6	2.7	2.9	4.1	4.1
1983	1.9	2.8	2.7	3.2	4.3	4.5
1984	2.0	2.8	2.7	3.1	4.3	4.4
1985	2.2	3.1	3.0	3.1	4.3	4.3
1986	2.0	2.8	2.8	3.2	4.4	4.6
1987	2.0	2.7	2.9	3.3	4.5	4.8
1988	2.2	3.0	3.3	3.5	4.7	4.9
1989	2.4	3.1	3.6	3.9	5.3	5.7
1990	2.4	3.1	3.6	3.9	5.3	5.5
1991	2.6	3.5	4.0	3.9	5.7	4.9
1992	2.5	3.3	3.8	3.8	5.7	4.8
1993	2.5	3.5	3.7	3.9	5.2	5.3
1994	2.4	3.2	3.6	3.5	4.8	4.4
1995	2.4	3.5	3.3	3.2	4.3	4.8

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Labor Force Statistics Derived from the Current Population Survey: 1940-87*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table S29-2 Standard errors for table 29-2**

October	Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college			Recent school dropouts		
	Low	Middle	High	Low	Middle	High
1972	4.2	2.2	3.1	5.1	3.3	—
1973	4.3	2.0	3.1	4.8	3.2	—
1974	—	—	—	—	—	—
1975	4.6	2.2	3.2	4.7	3.5	7.2
1976	5.4	2.1	3.0	4.8	3.3	8.0
1977	4.5	2.1	2.8	5.0	3.2	7.3
1978	4.7	2.0	2.8	5.0	3.3	6.6
1979	4.5	2.1	2.7	4.4	3.4	5.8
1980	4.4	2.1	3.2	4.4	3.6	7.1
1981	5.0	2.3	3.2	4.7	3.6	7.2
1982	4.6	2.2	3.7	4.3	3.7	—
1983	5.2	2.4	4.1	5.7	4.0	—
1984	4.7	2.5	4.2	4.8	4.2	—
1985	5.4	2.8	4.3	4.7	4.3	—
1986	4.6	2.6	3.9	5.4	4.3	—
1987	5.0	2.7	3.5	5.1	4.4	—
1988	5.3	2.6	3.8	4.9	4.3	—
1989	6.2	3.1	4.4	6.6	5.0	—
1990	6.8	3.0	5.8	6.4	5.3	—
1991	5.8	3.4	5.4	5.9	5.3	—
1992	5.7	3.1	6.0	5.3	5.1	—
1993	6.2	3.1	6.1	6.4	5.2	—
1994	5.6	3.0	5.7	5.5	4.6	—
1995	4.9	3.1	6.2	5.1	4.3	—

— Not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table S29-3 Standard errors for table 29-3**

Parents' highest education level	Recent high school graduates	
	not enrolled in college	Recent school dropouts
Total	2.4	3.2
Less than high school graduate	6.2	6.1
High school graduate	4.1	4.3
Some college and higher	4.2	6.6
Not available	5.6	7.7

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.

**Table S29-4 Standard errors for table 29-4**

October	Recent high school graduates				Recent school dropouts			
	not enrolled in college							
	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Total	White	Black	Hispanic
1972	1.7	1.7	5.4	—	2.7	3.2	6.1	—
1973	1.6	1.7	4.9	—	2.6	3.0	5.7	—
1974	1.6	1.7	5.5	—	2.6	3.1	5.4	—
1975	1.7	1.8	5.2	—	2.6	3.2	5.2	7.4
1976	1.7	1.7	5.5	—	2.6	3.1	5.2	—
1977	1.6	1.7	5.6	7.3	2.6	3.0	5.8	—
1978	1.6	1.6	5.3	7.0	2.6	3.1	4.8	—
1979	1.6	1.7	5.5	6.7	2.6	3.1	5.4	—
1980	1.7	1.7	4.9	—	2.7	3.3	5.2	7.2
1981	1.8	1.9	4.8	—	2.7	3.5	3.7	7.4
1982	1.9	2.0	4.5	7.1	2.9	3.7	5.1	—
1983	1.9	2.1	4.7	—	3.2	4.1	6.3	—
1984	2.0	2.2	4.7	7.0	3.1	3.9	6.6	7.5
1985	2.2	2.3	5.3	—	3.1	4.1	6.3	7.9
1986	2.0	2.2	4.9	7.7	3.2	4.3	8.1	7.0
1987	2.0	2.2	6.1	7.2	3.3	4.2	6.4	—
1988	2.2	2.4	5.8	10.4	3.5	4.4	6.5	9.2
1989	2.4	2.5	6.8	10.6	3.9	5.1	7.0	—
1990	2.4	2.6	6.0	—	3.9	5.0	8.2	—
1991	2.6	3.0	5.8	—	3.9	5.2	7.2	—
1992	2.5	2.8	5.7	8.6	3.8	5.0	—	8.1
1993	2.5	2.8	6.8	9.2	3.9	5.0	8.1	—
1994	2.4	2.7	6.3	9.0	3.5	4.7	7.7	7.5
1995	2.4	2.8	6.2	7.3	3.2	4.4	7.5	6.5

— Not available.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, October Current Population Surveys.